Bulgaria was admitted into NATO. Bulgaria has proven to be a true ally in the global war on terrorism and there are currently plans for three U.S. bases to be located within Bulgaria. Bulgaria has one of the fastest-growing European economies, and membership in the EU will accelerate its pace.

Congratulations to President Georgi Parvanov, Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev, Ambassador to Washington Elena Poptodorova, and my longtime friend and former ambassador to Athens, Stefan Stoyanov. I am grateful to serve with Congresswoman ELLEN TAUSCHER as co-chair of the Bulgaria Caucus.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

IT'S TIME TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. AL GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. It's time to raise the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, I love America, and I want to make real the ideal expressed in the Pledge of Allegiance, liberty and justice for all. Justice not just for those who make more in a day than a minimum wage worker makes in a year, not just for those who are in, those who are in charge, in control, included, but justice also for those who are out, who are left out of the economic recovery, who are without health insurance, who are locked out of an apartment because they cannot afford to pay rent.

Mr. Speaker, in the final analysis, the justness of America will not be determined by how we treat millionaires in the suites of life but, rather, how we treat minimum wage workers in the streets of life.

GO GATORS

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Florida Gators for their win Monday night to capture their second football national championship. With the Gators' 41–14 defeat of the Ohio State Buckeyes, they become the first Division I school to hold the national championship in men's basketball and football at the same time.

Coming into this game, many of the so-called experts did not give the Gators any chance of defeating the previously undefeated Buckeyes. However, once they took the field, the Gators were not intimidated. In fact, the Gators held Ohio State to only 82 yards of total offense, the fewest number of yards in BCS history.

The Florida Gators are an excellent example of both the university and the great State of Florida in their tenacity, spirit and, of course, their desire to succeed. I take great pride in representing the University of Florida and congratulate Coach Urban Meyer and the entire university on this great accomplishment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. I wanted to ask my colleague to continue for another minute since I am from Florida.

IRAQI SURGE

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, we need a surge of congressional action to stop George Bush's disastrous policy in Iraq. The country needs and is desperate for a change in policy in Iraq, and tonight President George Bush will continue his policy of failure, of giving us just more of the same.

It is clear that we need to insist on a political solution in Iraq rather than to insist on Americans continuing to pour billions of dollars and thousands of lives into this political chaos in Iraq. The President has refused to listen to the bipartisan panel calling for a change in Iraq. He has refused to listen to the American people. But he cannot refuse to listen to a Congress that fulfills its obligation under the Constitution to exercise the power of the purse to stop this misguided escalation.

The U.S. House should vote in clear and no uncertain terms to fund the troops that are there and to cut off funding for any escalation. It is our constitutional obligation. It is a commonsense policy to insist on Iraqis standing up. That is the direction and the change we need in this country.

STEM CELL BREAKTHROUGH

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Wake Forest University's Institute for Regenerative Medicine for its recent medical breakthrough in amniotic fluid stem cell research. Using these specific cells does not require the destruction of human life at any stage.

This is tremendous news. Not only does this prevent the destruction of human life but these stem cells have amazing properties that show very promising results. Unlike embryonic stem cells, these remain stable for years without forming tumors and are easily retrieved for medical use. They also have the ability to grow into brain, muscle and other forms of tissue that could potentially cure diseases. In addition, since these cells are a genetic match to a fetus, they can be used to help cure birth defects or even be frozen over time to use as a personalized tissue bank for use later in life.

In addition to being a medical breakthrough, this gives hope to millions who support the sanctity of life that curing diseases and the potential for regenerative tissue growth are possible in a moral and ethical way.

I am proud to recognize the truly amazing work of Wake Forest University's Institute of Regenerative Medicine and look forward to the promise of its continued research.

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RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. SCHIFF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, today we have the opportunity to raise the wages of 13 million Americans, and we should take it.

Why raise the minimum wage in America? For the simple reason that men and women in the richest Nation on Earth should not work full time and still be relegated to living in poverty. What does it mean for the father or mother in a family of three to live on the current minimum wage? It means an income of $10,000 a year.

Imagine living in Glendale, Burbank or Pasadena, or any city in America, and trying to get by on $10,000 a year. A raise in the minimum wage will be an additional $4,000 for that family of three. It will mean more groceries on the table and a greater opportunity to get health care. It will mean potentially pulling that family out of poverty. It is the right thing to do. We have the opportunity today to make that happen for millions, and we should take it.

REDUCING TAX AND REGULATORY BURDEN

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak briefly about the issue that my good friend from Burbank, Mr. SCHIFF, did, and that is the issue of minimum wage.

I am well aware of the fact that 80 percent of the American people believe we should increase the minimum wage, and I am for everyone's wage being increased. I want those who are struggling to get on the first rung of the economic ladder to have every opportunity possible.

That is why I think it is very important that as we prepare to embark on this debate on the minimum wage, that we focus on the most important item that we face and that was raised by Mr. SCHIFF, that being the issue of our being the richest economy in the world.

Mr. Speaker, that is not by accident. It is because of policies that we have put into place that are doing everything we can to ensure economic growth. So that is why as we look at this issue of making sure that people